

## ABSTRACT

An intervertebral distraction tool has a clamshell head with upper and lower halves, each having a curvate outer surface and a flat inner surface. The distal side of the head is hinged so that the head opens and closes from the proximal side of the head. The hinge is a separating hinge that allows the halves to not only angulate with respect to one another about the hinge axis, but also to vertically separate from one another at the hinge. A distraction separator has decreasing taper at its distal end and a longitudinal bore that accommodates the elongate shaft of the trial so that the separator can be moved longitudinally relative to the shaft. Upon forward movement of the separator, the tapered upper and lower surfaces engage the flat inner surfaces of the head, causing the halves to angulate about the hinge axis of the head, thereby opening the head.